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ABSTRACT

Since independence from Britain in 1964, the Ministry of Education of Malawi has concentrated on developing a skilled and educated citizenry and on expanding agricultural and technical training. Secondary education was expanded and diversified during the 1960's, a university was established, and a correspondence school was set up to serve the almost 4,000 students who could not be absorbed into existing secondary schools. Training programs made available to adults after 1964 include child care, literacy, health training, auto repair, handicraft, homecraft, and clerical skills. Improvements on the primary level have centered around increasing the number of teachers to meet the target of 50 students per teacher. Educational policy priorities from 1974-76 stressed expansion in areas of primary, vocational, and agricultural education. New language and arithmetic textbooks for primary school were published and in-service training programs for primary and secondary teachers of language and science were established. The Ministry of Education concludes that its major tasks are to consolidate the improvements already underway on all levels of education, increase the number of boarding schools for girls, improve educational research capabilities, and expand the primary teacher training colleges. (Author/DB)

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MAJOR TRENDS IN EDUCATION IN MALAWI 1974 - 1976

This paper briefly presents the major trends in education in Malawi for the academic years 1974/75 and 1975/76. The presentation is in six parts:

I. Educational Background Information
II. Educational Policy
III. Educational reform/innovations
IV. Education Research
V. Major Educational Problems
VI. Prospects for Educational Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION: EDUCATION POLICY (1964 - 73)

2. A country's rate and pattern of development is critically dependent on the availability of appropriate skilled and educated personnel. Government's priority is therefore to ensure within feasibility limits that the development potential of the country is not frustrated due to lack of skilled and educated personnel. In the 1960's, Government's educational policy was geared to meet manpower requirements and priority was accorded to the expansion and diversification of secondary education and the development of post secondary education through the setting up of the University of Malawi. Quantitatively, expansion has involved a 90 per cent increase in Junior Certificate (2 years Secondary) output between 1964 (1610) and 1976 (3076) and an even greater (155 per cent) increase in Malawi Certificate of Education (4 years Secondary) output between 1964 (630) and 1976 (1607).

3. Qualitatively, the curriculum has been substantially diversified and includes considerable emphasis upon technical subjects, Home Economics and Agriculture. Accompanying the development of secondary schools was the setting up of the Malawi Correspondence College to cater primarily for students who, on successful completion of their primary course, could not be absorbed into existing secondary schools. In 1975 out of 28,005 Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination Passers, only 16 per cent of them were selected for secondary school education (i.e. Form one). Some 3,600 students were being served by the correspondence college in 1976.

4. The University of Malawi offers diploma and degree courses in various fields. Bunda College of Agriculture offers a three-year course leading to a Diploma in Agriculture and a four-year Degree course in Agriculture. Chancellor College offers courses leading to Degrees in Arts, Science, Social Science, Education, Public Administration and Law, and Diplomas in Education and Public Administration. Chancellor College also offers graduate certificate courses in Education. The Polytechnic offers Diploma courses in Business Studies, Engineering, Laboratory Technology, Public Health Inspection and Technical Teaching.

5. The structure of the education system of Malawi is shown in Chart I.

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6. The other major educational trend reflected during this period has been in the field of agricultural education, both of formal and informal types. Major expansion in Agriculture has taken place in Vocational Training with concentration at Technical and Field levels. The growth in numbers of trained government workers in agriculture made possible by this expansion of vocational training has meant that there has been a great expansion in the amount of farmer training undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources since Inuependence, in 1964. This has been at the two levels of informal training through contact between farmers and extention workers, and through the Rural Training Centres that have been built since 1964.

7. Formal technical/vocational education is provided in four distinct groups of institutions:

(a) Agricultural Rural Training Centres mentioned in paragraph 6 above.

(b) Rural Technical Schools.

(c) Technical Schools.

(d) The Polytechnic.

8. The Rural Technical Schools carry out basic craft skill vocational training of a specialized nature suited to both the rural and the urban environment.

9. The Technical Schools run courses in brickwork, carpentry and joinery, wood machining, plumbing and the engineering trades. Discussions aimed at the introduction of technical lessons in Primary Schools are underway.

10. The Polytechnic courses run by the Board of Governors are for personal secretaries and copy typists. The subjects offered include book-keeping and office practice, at post-school Certificate/M.C.E. Level. A block-release course for improvement in general clerical work, part-time day and evening courses for the intermediate and final examinations of professional bodies and evening classes in Book-keeping, Shorthand and Typing, Economics, Office Practice, Chichewa and English are also run by the Board of Governors through the Business Studies Department. The Engineering Department provides apprenticeship courses for craftsmen and technicians in Mechanical, Electrical and Automobile Engineering. The Department of Mathematics and Science runs a one-year full-time course for Laboratory Assistants and a two-year full-time upgrading course for Health Assistants.

11. Adult education and training programmes are administered by other Ministries and Organisations.

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12. The on-going adult education programmes include:

Ministry or Agency	Training Programmes
1. Community Development and Social Welfare	Community Development leaders, Homecraft, Health, Nutrition, Child care, Literacy, etc.
2. Health	Health Assistants, Health Inspectors, Nurses, paramedics rural health training.
3. Agriculture and Natural Resources	Veterinary technicians, fisheries agents, agriculture extension agents, agriculture degree programmes, forestry agents, farmer training centres, rural nutrition, etc.
4. Ministry of Youth and Culture	Technical, Agricultural and clerical programmes within the Malawi Young Pioneers Programme.
5. Malawi Broadcasting Corporation	Adult and formal School education broadcasts.
6. Malawi Library Service	A Mobile lending library with national coverage.
7. Labour	Apprentice programme, leadership training, etc.
8. Transport and Communications	Auto repair, postal and telegraph training, etc.
9. Ministry of Works and Supplies	Artisan and technical training.
10. Missions	Handicraft, homecraft, artisan and agricultural training.
11. Malawi Correspondence Centre	In-service(Upgrading) teacher training, correspondence courses for primary, Junior and Secondary School Certificates.

12. Some basic educational statistics are shown in Chart 2 for the period 1974/75 to 1975/76.

CHART 2.

(A) Primary	Total Enrolment	Number of Assisted Schools	Number of Unassisted Schools	Enrolment in Assisted Schools	Enrolment in Unassisted Schools
1974/75	611,678	1,510	581	550,510	(10% of total) 61,168
1975/76	641,709	1,552	588	577,538	64,171

TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

	Teachers in Assisted Schools						Teachers in Unassisted Schools	Total
	Diploma	T2	T3	T4	T5	Temp.		
1974/75	1	749	3780	3361	509	1065	1059	10524
1975/76	1	947	4053	3034	412	1047	1104	10588

Note: 1. The pupils/teacher ratio continues to be better in the upper classes than in lower classes (target is 50:1) and it is not uncommon to find the same teacher conducting classes in two shifts.

2. T2 teachers = Two year training on a 4-year secondary education base.

T3 teachers = Two year training on a 2-year secondary education base.

T4 teachers = Two year training; Primary School Leaving Certificate.

T5 teachers = Two year training; no Primary School Leaving Certificate.

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(B) Secondary Education:

	No. of Assisted Schools	No. of Government Schools	No. of Unassisted Schools	Total Schools	Total Enrolment
1974/75	18	31	11	60	11,295
1975/76	18	31	11	60	14,489

TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

	Graduates		Diplomates		T2/T3 or other quali-fica-tions	Total Seco-ndary tea-chers
	Expatriates	Malawian	Expatriates	Malawian		
74/75	183	134	33	263	81	694
75/76	202	136	37	292	81	748

Note: The proportion of expatriate teachers has been steadily decreasing over recent years as more and more Malawians are recruited to replace the expatriates. In 1975/76 almost 68% of teachers were Malawians.

(C) Tertiary Education: University of Malawi has three constituent Colleges: Bunda, Chancellor and the Polytechnic:

	Enrolment	Total Teaching Staff
1974/75	1,086	133
1975/76	1,146	141

Note: The University is still heavily dependent on expatriate staff for its teaching and to a much lesser extent for its administration. The Malawi teaching staff totalled 56 in 1975/76 and in addition 18 were on training abroad.

13. Primary School teachers are now trained in 7 Training Colleges, five of which are small colleges and primarily run by religious missions.

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14. Because of the current emphasis on qualitative improvement of Primary Education, the intention is to increase the number of T2 teachers while at the same time maintain a steady supply of T3 teachers only.

15. Inservice Training of Teachers at both Primary and Secondary levels is currently undertaken by the Ministry of Education. At present, all primary school teachers whether qualified or not are required to attend orientation courses organised in their districts by District Education Officers and Inspectors during the first term of each academic year. Before conducting courses in their own districts, all District Education Professional Staff attend an induction course organised by subject specialists at the Ministry of Education Headquarters.

16. The purpose of this induction course is to brief the District Staff on new developments in various primary curriculum subjects and the areas of weakness which need emphasizing. In addition to the annual orientation courses in each district, there are weekend courses organised as and when required.

17. As for secondary school teachers, in-service courses are organised by the Ministry of Education Headquarters subject specialists as and when necessary. The general policy at present is to hold an In-service course in each subject at least once every two years. University subject specialists have always been involved in these in-service courses.

II. EDUCATIONAL POLICY 1974 - 1975:

18. Priorities for Education and Training Policy in the 1974-76 grew out of the principles of human resources development and assessment of Malawi's manpower needs and the inheritance of the progress made in the preceding years.

19. The first priority goes to the development of all aspects of education for agricultural and rural development embracing (a) primary education (b) Vocational training and (c) farmer training through:

(i) improving the quality of Primary Education and re-orienting it towards the economically important agricultural sector; teaching of agriculture in schools; improvement and expansion of primary teacher training to provide the major focus of this effort;

(ii) improving and expanding the Malawi Young Pioneer Scheme and the agricultural settlement scheme. The training of Young Pioneers is designed to provide a core of disciplined and hardworking farmers, and is basically a long-term policy for raising agricultural productivity;

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(iii) expanding and diversifying agricultural training at degree, diploma and field-level status. Field level workers are trained with a view to intensifying farmer training programmes.

20. The Ministry of Education is responsible for formal education at the primary, secondary and tertiary level as well as for technical and vocational education and teacher training; and administration, financial and academic functions. Responsibility for administration of primary education has been delegated to the Local Education Authorities to whom Regional Education Officers (three in all) transmit Government Policy through District Education Officers. Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational education and Primary Teacher Training are directly controlled by the Ministry of Education. The University of Malawi has responsibility for training of secondary school teachers and also diploma/degree courses in the Country. Its policy is directed by the University Council.

21. Public education is financed by the State, the Local Education Authorities and to a lesser extent by voluntary agencies. In addition to the state-assisted schools there are a number of unassisted institutions at both the primary and secondary levels which are privately owned and which receive no grant from the State.

III. EDUCATIONAL REFORMS AND INNOVATIONS:

22. There have been substantial changes in the content and methods of teaching since the early seventies. Syllabuses of core subjects (English, Chichewa and Mathematics) were revised between 1972 and 1973 at both primary and secondary levels.

23. The objective now is to emphasize formal teaching and aim at raising the general standard of education at the primary and secondary school levels. New textbooks for primary schools in Chichewa and Arithmetic were published in 1973 and 1974. Revisions of the primary textbooks are in progress.

24. Domasi is an in-service training centre consisting of a Science Centre, an English Language Centre and Teachers' Upgrading Centre. It is envisaged that the research work of these three Centres will eventually be incorporated into the Institute of Education which it is proposed to establish. Details of the actual operations to be conducted at the Institute of Education are still under discussion, but it is envisaged that they will embrace the functions of the Science Centre and of the English Language Centre, Curriculum evaluation and development, the production of educational teaching materials and the mounting of up-grading and short in-service training courses for primary and secondary teachers.

25. It is Government's intention to undertake programmes for:

(a) Recruitment and training of temporary primary school teachers;

(b) Expanding capacity in educational materials resources and utilization; and

(c) Expanding capacity in curriculum evaluation and development.

26. These programmes will be incorporated in the various functions of the Institute of Education, the establishment of which is now under discussion. Some advantages of these programmes include:

(i) The establishment of a mechanism to recruit those temporary teachers who demonstrate interest and neophyte capacity as teachers into the ranks of trained/qualified T3/T2 teachers. At present there is no regularly established vehicle for the recruitment of temporary teachers employed as primary teachers into the ranks of qualified teachers.

(ii) The development and utilization of a wider range of educational materials resources than is now available to the primary school classroom teacher will serve to increase students' knowledge of facts, facilitate pupils' learning more complex skills more quickly, enhance concept devebpment and thereby contribute to raising the proportion of pupils who acquire the skills, abilities and bodies of cognitive knowledge necessary for promotion from one standard to the next.

(iii) The focus upon Agriculture, Science and Health Education aspects of the Primary school curriculum will serve an immediate need as identified by inspectorate officers. A full scale review of the achievements of pupils afforded contact with these aspects of the curriculum will provide the perspective necessary to consider any modifications or changes in emphasis and/or changes in the scope and sequencing of content when the pupils' achievements are juxtaposed with the objectives the new curricula were created to serve.

27. The Ministry sees one of its major tasks now as that of consolidation of the work already established. Only those innovative efforts that bear directly on consolidation and qualitative improvements of what has already been established will be given sympathetic attention. Innovation for the sake of it should not be allowed at a time when the Country is seriously concerned with the quality of its school leavers at all levels. It is time to take stock of what has been done to date so as to see where the weaknesses of the formal education system are. To this end, the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour are carrying out a Tracer Study of Students and School leavers.

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The purpose of the study is to follow the labour market experiences of the Secondary School-leavers both J.C. and M.C.E. level. The experiences traced will help to better define the relationship between education and employment.

IV. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH:

28. Research in Education is currently being conducted by the School of Education, University of Malawi. When the Institute of Education becomes functional, research capacity will be broader than it is now.

V. MAJOR PROBLEMS:

29. Insofar as the Ministry of Education's responsibility over formal education is concerned, considerable and satisfactory progress has been made during the years 1974 - 1976. The staffing of secondary schools had improved greatly, and it is hoped within the next few years a good measure of localisation in the teaching force will be achieved if the current trend is maintained. At present consideration has been given (under 2nd IDA Education Project) to increase the number of boarding places for girls since it has been shown that girls' performance is better in boarding than in day secondary schools. In order to improve the quality of secondary education offered in day secondary schools, considerable emphasis has been placed on improving the facilities at these schools. Libraries and Science Laboratories are being built; and self-help efforts are being intensified to provide dormitories at these schools as shown in Chart III.

30. There are three main problems at the primary level:

(a) The major issue is improving the qualifications of the large number of inadequately qualified teachers, reducing the number of temporary teachers and reducing the high level of wastage in primary schools. A good beginning has been made through upgrading courses and the expansion of Teachers' Training College enrolment to alleviate this problem.

(b) The second problem (because of the large number of schools and distances involved) is that the distribution of teaching materials tends to be slow and costly.

(c) The third issue concerns the relationship between the central and local organisations of education. The administrative and financial responsibility for primary education is left to local communities. The role of the Central Government is primarily to allocate teachers and pay their salaries.

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While this policy has given a sense of participation to the local people in educating the youth, it has resulted in wide variations in the quality of school building and teaching aids. A constructive programme for model primary schools, at least one in each district, is underway, funded by UNICEF and IDA. The model primary schools in each district will serve as examples to the communities for the construction of functional and durable structures in an effort to solve the problem of quality of school buildings and teaching aids.

VI. PROSPECTS FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

31. The major trends in educational development which will continue in this decade are:

(a) Improvements of primary education and girls' secondary schools.

(b) Expansion of University Education.

32. The improvement of primary education has two closely related strands. The first is the re-orientation of the primary school curriculum, already well underway, through which primary education ceases to orient itself to the needs of the few who pass on to secondary education, but instead is becoming fundamentally a terminal stage designed to meet the needs of the vast majority of pupils who make their livelihood in the rural areas. Consolidation of the teaching of Agriculture in the primary curriculum provides the major focus of this effort. As a first step towards taking an active part in the field of adult education, within the primary school curriculum, the Ministry of Education has practical skills' equipment (e.g. Home Economics in the model primary schools mentioned above). Learning and training are, therefore, planned to provide for both quantitative and qualitative improvement of the education system as well as satisfy the entire formal and informal needs of the community.

33. The second strand is the improvement and expansion of Primary Teacher Training Colleges. To both minimize costs per student place and gain the qualitative educational advantage of economics of scale, the Government has planned to gradually replace five small colleges and provide the bulk of its primary teachers' education programme in three large national colleges to be established, one in each region with enrolment of 540 students each. The first of these three colleges was built in Lilongwe; the second is an expansion of old Soche Hill Teachers' Training College in Blantyre.

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These first two have already started producing T2 and T3 teachers. The third is under construction in Mzuzu in the Northern Region. By 1979 provision to certify some 350 T2s and 480 T3s each year is planned. The improvement in the quality of primary education that this will gradually bring about will also make the re-orientation of the primary school curriculum easier to achieve. The enhanced quality of primary schools will improve the internal efficiency of primary education by helping to reduce the prevailing high rates of wastage (dropouts and repeaters).

34. It is intended to expand the existing facilities at 6 girls' secondary schools and 1 mixed secondary school. The expansion of the girls secondary schools will enable more girls to be admitted into boarding secondary schools, thereby increasing girls' successful completion of secondary education to enable more girls to participate more fully in the social and economic life of the Country.

35. A demand is now emerging from both private and public sectors for more specialized skills and plans are now underway both to expand the scale of diploma and degree level training in Agriculture and to provide increasingly for the emerging specialized demands. These development plans envisage an increase in student enrolment at Bunda College from 234 in 1974 to 350 in 1980, with an annual output of graduates and diplomates increasing from 12 and 45 respectively in 1974 to 28 and 76 respectively in 1980.

36. The University has recently been directed to take over medical nurses' courses for State Registered Nurses and Medical Assistants' courses (both post-secondary level courses) which have hitherto been the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. This is a welcome move in view of the possibility of the establishment of a University Medical School for the training of doctors.

37. There has been lack of co-ordination and planning of adult education programmes in the past which resulted in duplications of programmes within the ministries/organisations. The Government is aware of the benefits which might be gained by improved co-ordination, and the creation of a National Advisory Council for Education and Training, now under discussion, will explore means by which improved planning can be achieved.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, LILONGWE, MALAWI
JULY, 1977

CHART III: BUILDING PROGRAMMES - SECONDARY SCHOOLS 1972/73 - 1976/77

	TH	ADMIN-BLOCK	CLASS ROOMS	LIB-RARY	LABORA-TORIES	HOSTELS	KITCHEN/ DINING HALL	ABLUTION OR TOILET BLOCKS	BORE-HOLE	PUMP HOUSE	ENGINE AND ENGINE HOUSE	OTHERS
1972/73	2	-	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	3 J SH, K/D Improvements, water improvements, new supply
1973/74	9	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	1	Improvements to K/D and water supply
1974/75	5	-	1	-	3	-	-	2	-	1	1	Water improvements, renovation of self-help classrooms, furniture and equipment.
1975/76	10	1	4	-	8 including 1 C/R adaptation to lab.	1	1	2	-	-	-	1 JHS, electricity and water supplies.
1976/77	19	-	4	1	2	2 Extention	-	1	-	-	2	Improvement to water supply, furniture and other equipment. 2 J SH.

LEGEND:

TH = Teacher House
J SH = Junior Staff Houses
K/D = Kitchen/Dining Hall

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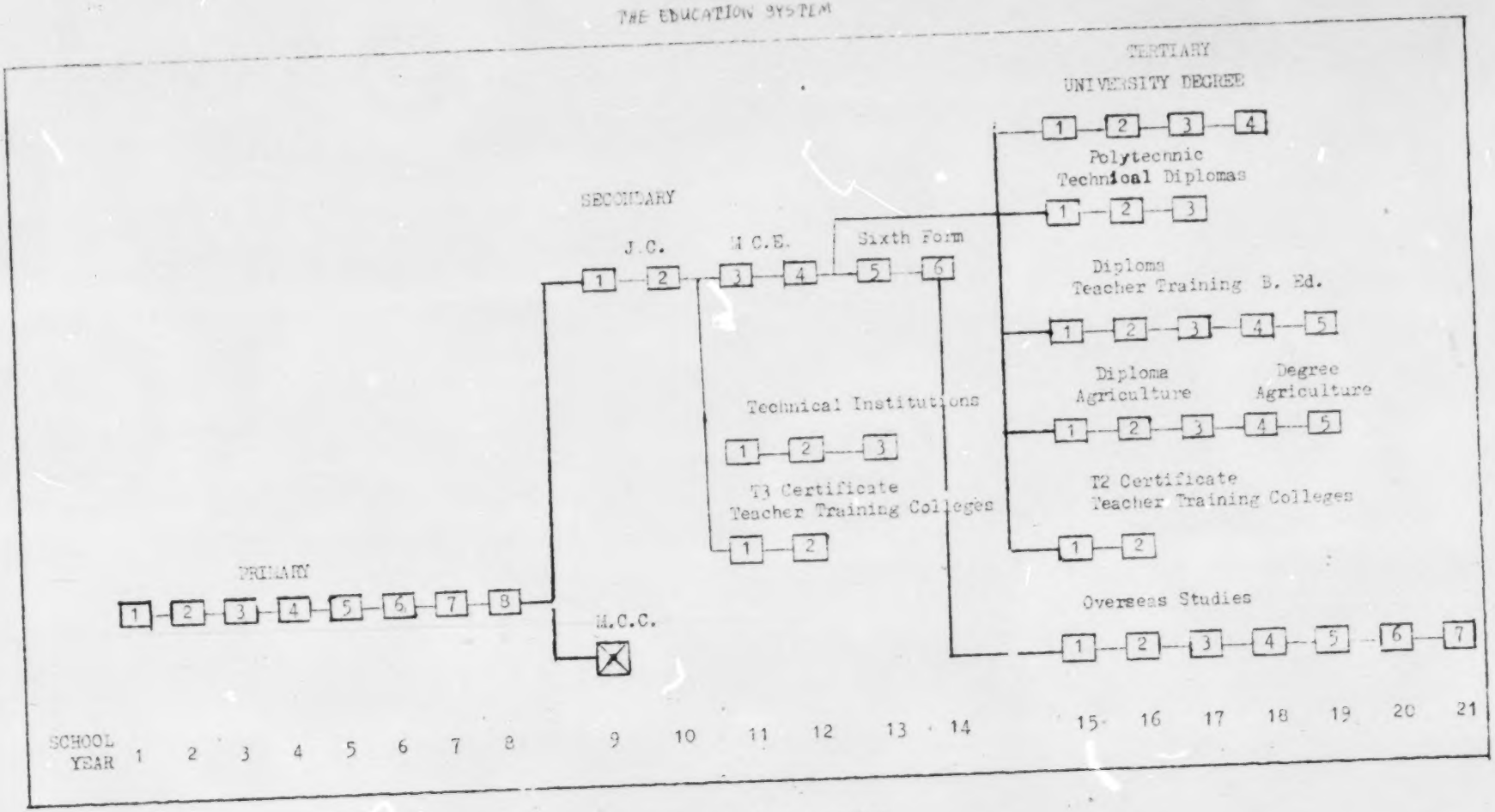
CHART I

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM



Note: ⊠ The progression of Malawi Correspondence Centre graduates varies.